

PHILATELIC LINCOLNIAN : Stamps
4¢ Lincoln

1870-99

DRAWER 21

STAMPS : LINCOLN

71.2009.085.05592



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2014

<https://archive.org/details/philately4189linc>

Philately

4¢ Lincoln Stamp

1890-1899

Excerpts from newspapers and other
sources

From the files of the
Lincoln Financial Foundation Collection

• STORIES IN STAMPS



Why Abraham Lincoln Grew a Beard

THE campaign posters of 1860 pictured an extremely thin, gaunt Lincoln. In contrast with the photo of the heavy-joweled vice presidential candidate, Hannibal Hamlin, he appeared even more emaciated.

Eleven-year-old Grace Bedell of Westfield, N. Y., saw the picture and immediately said she didn't like it. In true childlike sincerity she wrote a letter to Mr. Lincoln suggesting that he grow a beard to hide his thin features.

Since he was especially interested in children, Lincoln answered the letter, pointed out that people might think it "a piece of silly affectation" if he were to grow whiskers at this stage. But he grew them nevertheless and by the time of his inauguration he had the heavy beard which has become so familiar to every American.

The inaugural train was routed from Springfield to Washington by way of Westfield, N. Y. A large crowd gathered to see the new President, and in the crowd was little Grace. But she wasn't tall enough to see her hero. The President, however, remembered her and after his address Lincoln called the child to the rear platform of his car. There the great man shook her hand and kissed her.

"You see," he said, indicating his beard, "I let these whiskers grow for you, Grace."

Lincoln, with whiskers, is shown above on a stamp of the issue of 1890, 4-cent dark brown, after a photograph from life. The stamp is enlarged.

(Copyright, 1939, NEA Service, Inc.)

Capital Times, Madison

2-1-37

Feb. 1957

LINCOLN POSTAGE STAMPS— ISSUE OF 1890-1893



222
Issue 1890-93



254
Issue 1894-99

During the years 1890-1893, the Post Office Department issued, as one of its ordinary postage stamps, a four cent, dark brown Lincoln stamp which was first placed on sale, June 2, 1890. The Lincoln head faces three-quarters right and is from the portrait made by John H. Littlefield.

The stamp is described as follows: "Four-cent—portrait of Abraham Lincoln, after a photograph from life, three-quarters face, looking to the right. The surroundings of the medallion are the same as the 1-cent stamp (Franklin), with the necessary change of figures and letters representing the denomination. Color dark brown. Issued June 2, 1890."

The stamp bears the catalogue number of 222. It is similar to the 1870-83 issues and measures 19 x 22 mm. This issue is without triangles in the upper corners, and was printed by the American Bank Note Company.

THE 1894-1899 ISSUE

In July 1894, the manufacture of stamps was assumed by the Treasury Department, and the four-cent Lincoln stamp appeared in a velvet brown color. The first day of issue was September 11, 1894, and the stamp appeared on watermarked paper after June 5, 1895. The design was practically the same as the 1890-93 issue except for triangular ornaments in the upper angles.

The four-cent Lincoln stamps with the triangular ornaments are catalogued as follows:

- 254 —Dark brown (Unwmkd.)
- 254a—Imperf. (Unwmkd.)
- 269—Dark brown (Wmkd.)
- 280—Rose brown (Wmkd.)
- 280a—Lilac brown (Wmkd.)
- 280b—Orange brown (Wmkd.)

See Post Office Department: A Description of United States Postage Stamps, pages 23-24, and 27-28. 1955

THE GATLING GUN

In 1861 Dr. Richard J. Gatling, of Indianapolis, Indiana, invented an "improved" machine gun. Acting upon the suggestion of Colonel R. A. Maxwell "that a special objective weapon was needed" by the United States government to suppress the rebellion, the multibarreled, crank-operated gun was constructed and first tested in the spring of 1862. It could fire 200 shots per minute. The six revolving barrels were rifled, and the calibre was 58/100 inches. The gun used steel chargers with paper cartridges. With complete equipment, Gatling's invention was manufactured to sell for approximately \$1,000.

This "improved" weapon was viewed with indifference by the Bureau of Ordnance, and it was not officially adopted by the United States Army until August 24, 1866, even though a few experimental Gatling guns saw service during the Civil War.

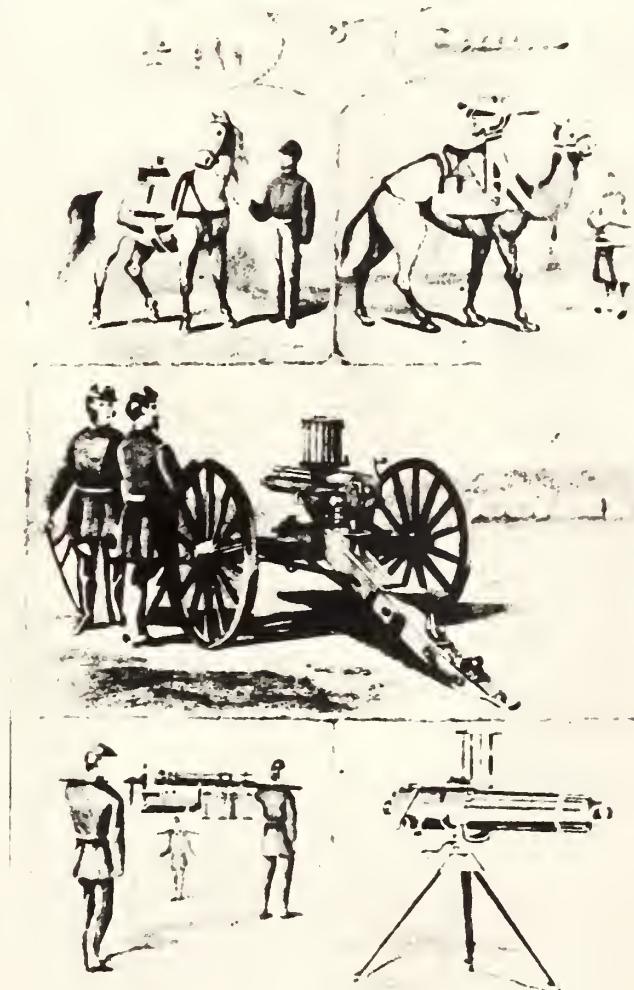
On June 15, 1877 Gatling wrote Miss Lizzie Jarvis from Hartford explaining why he invented the Gatling gun. This original letter in the Foundation files follows: "It may be interesting to you to know how I came to invent the gun which bears my name; I will tell you: In 1861, during the opening events of the war

(residing at the time in Indianapolis, Ind.) I witnessed almost daily the departure of troops to the front and the return of the wounded, sick and dead. The most of the latter lost their lives not in battle, but by sickness and exposure incident to the service. It occurred to me if I could invent a machine—a gun—which could by its rapidity of fire, enable one man to do as much battle duty as a hundred, that it would, to a great extent supersede the necessity of large armies, and consequently, exposure to battle and disease be greatly diminished. I thought over the subject and finally this idea took practical form in the invention of the Gatling Gun."

Perhaps, Gatling could have gotten the immediate acceptance of his gun for service in the Civil War, if he had directly contacted President Lincoln in 1862. Hampered by red tap and bureaucratic apathy, he waited until February 18, 1864 to take up with Lincoln the matter of the adoption of his invention: "Pardon me for the liberty I have taken in addressing you this letter.

"I enclose herewith a circular giving a description of the 'Gatling Gun' of which I am the inventor and patentee.

"The arm in question, is an invention of no ordinary



The Gatling Gun

"It was during this invasion of (Kentucky in September, 1862) by the rebel forces (under Bragg) that I first heard of the 'Gatling Gun,' the rebel troops telling us of a gun the 'Yanks' used in the battle of Richmond, Kentucky, where they would hitch a horse to the gun, start on a gallop, turn a crank, and the bullets flew almost as thick as hail, mowing down the rebel lines. They could not understand it, and wanted to know if we could tell them anything about the infernal machine." Felix G. Stidger, *Treason History of the Order of Sons of Liberty*, Chicago, 1903, p. 21.

Gleanings And Pertinent Data About The Four 4c Brown Lincolns Of 1890, '94, '95, '98

Spensley S. Dakin

From accounts of newspaper comment about the regular postage stamp series issued beginning in 1890—which included the 4¢ denomination with a portrait of Abraham Lincoln on it, after a photograph from life by John H. Littlefield—stamp users and philatelists of that period were as hard to please as those of today, and just as partisan. To illustrate, the New York Times of March 18, 1890 said, among other things, "Good printing cannot be done at his price", referring to the then Postmaster General, John Wanamaker. It continued:

"The Postmaster General's weakness for aping the British in the size and color of letter postage stamps has not only brought upon him the maledictions of those who have no appetite for printer's ink, even when smeared homeopathically on the tongue, but it has also subjected him to the ridicule of everybody who knows anything about the subject."



The 1890 stamp

This outburst was occasioned by the change in size, from 1" x 25/32" of the previous issue, to 7/8" x 3/4", the British size for letter stamps, as well as a new variety of ink colors. There was quite a bit more, including the criticism that poor ink and inferior paper were used in their printing, although the concession is made that "nothing is the matter with the engraving on the new stamp".



The 1894 stamp

The above was Democratic criticism. Defending Republican Postmaster General Wanamaker, the "Press", April 27, 1890, printed the following, on the letterhead of the Post Office Department, Office of the Third Assistant Postmaster General, Washington, dated March 27, 1890. It was addressed to N. O. Wilhelm, 86 West Twelfth St., New York, N. Y.:

"Sir: Yours addressed to the Postmaster General complaining of the quality of the paper used in the manufacture of the new series of postage stamps has been referred to this office.

"In reply I beg to say that upon a recent investigation of a similar complaint it was found that the stamp paper now used is to but a trifling extent different from the paper adopted by the department as the standard of not only the present contract but the contract made four years ago, and that difference is in favor of the paper actually in use, the record of strength of the two papers by the testing machine of the department being as follows:

"Strength of paper of contract standard, 13 pounds; strength of paper used by stamp contractors, 15 pounds. In fact, the paper in use is almost precisely the same as that which has been used for the past five years, being made by the same firm, in the same mill, and by the same formula.

"Yours very respectfully,
(Signed) A. D. Hazen,
"Third Assistant Postmaster
General."

The foregoing, but for the dates, much resembles current criticism printed in our stamp journals about present day new issues of United States postage stamps by the public.

Clifford C. Cole, Jr., writing on "United States Gossip" in the September 24, 1949 issue of "Weekly Philatelic Gossip", tells that "200-subject plates bearing imprints, single or double letters and plate numbers" were used for some 2¢ and all 4¢, 5¢, 8¢, and 10¢ values of the 1890-93 issues. This discussion deals only with the 4¢ value.

The "imprints" uniformly consisted of the words "American Bank Note Company" in sans-serif shaded capitals. The word "No." was in Roman italics, immediately followed by the actual plate number in serifed slanted numerals. In the case of the plates bearing letters or numeral letters, these were in upright shaded Roman.

These various insignia were placed on the different types of plates as follows:

The imprint appeared four times, grouped so that the first two words were above the fifth stamps in both the left and right panes (of 100), and the second two words above the sixth stamps.

Similarly, the first two words were below the ninety-fifth stamps, and the last two words below the ninety-sixth stamps at the bottom in each pane.

Finally, and during the printing, stamps in the left pane, and above the second and below the ninety-second stamps in the right pane. The actual plate number was above the ninth and below the ninety-ninth stamps in the left pane, and above the third and below the ninety-third stamps in the right pane.

The sheets of 200 received eleven horizontal rows of 12 gauge perforation, eliminating all horizontal straight edges, and then twenty vertical rows and a vertical wheel which simultaneously divided the sheet into panes of 100 as it provided the perforation in this direction, (also 12 gauge perf.).

Hence there was a straight edge at the right of the tenth vertical row in the left pane, and to the left of the first vertical row of the right pane.

Another type of 200 subject-plate was similar in all respects to the foregoing, except that in addition it bore letters so spaced that they appeared above the seventh and below the ninety-seventh stamps in the left pane, and above the fourth and below the ninety-fourth stamps in the right pane. Perforation and separation into panes was also the same as before.

Lester G. Brookman in Volume II of his book "The 19th Century Postage Stamps of the United States" writes, about the Four Cent Stamp of 1890 as follows:

"This stamp was not issued until June 2, 1890. It is one of the more common stamps of the series since it paid the postage on double weight letters. It carried a portrait of Lincoln as described heretofore.

"The 1890 issue was the last printed by private contractors. We once saw an essay of this stamp that was very similar to the issued stamp in that about the only difference was a lack of lines on the shirt and there was no wart shown on his face.

"We imagine that this last detail would have amused Lincoln for he certainly was not a vain man.
"The imperforate 4¢ came from

Plate J52, but, as has been explained before, it is our opinion that they should have the status of proofs. Despite the fact that these imperforates were not issued as stamps they are popular items and bring good prices in auctions.

"Shades (are) dark brown, blackish brown; varieties: double transfer; plates, J51-55, MM200-204; cancellations, black, blue, magenta; cancellation varieties: China; quantity issued—65,739,475.

"The Four Cent 1894: This stamp was issued on September 11, 1894, with twelve gauge perforations. It is our (Brookman's) understanding that while a full sheet of this stamp got out of the Bureau and became available to certain collectors in the imperforate form, they were not regularly so issued.

"It is our opinion that items of this nature should be considered as finished plate proofs. These imperforates were not gummed when they came from the Bureau but were unofficially gummed and even today are being offered as 'with original gum'.

"Shades: dark brown, brown; varieties: none; plates: 45, 50, 51 and 59, (400-subject plates); plates 92, 94, 104, 106 (200-subject plates); cancellations: supplementary mail Type F; quantity issued—15,718,150."

"The Four Cent 1895: This stamp was issued on June 5, 1895 in dark brown. As was the case of the 5¢, the plates of this 4¢ wore rapidly due to natural impurities in the ink which was made of earthen ingredients. The remarks made about the earlier imperforates apply equally to this stamp.

"It is our understanding that 300 got out of the Bureau imperforate. Shades: black brown, dark brown, dark yellow brown.

"Varieties: double transfer; plates: 92, 94, 104, 106, 194, 195, 196, 197, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462 and 463. Cancellations: Philippines & Samoa. Estimated quantity issued 78, 167, 836.

"The Four Cent 1898: This stamp

is identical with the 4¢ 1895 except that the color has been changed to lighter shades of brown listed below. As a matter of fact, this stamp runs to nearly a dozen easily separated shades."

This stamp was overprinted for use in the Philippines and Guam; 309,814 copies were made with the Philippine overprint, while only 5000 with the Guam overprint were sold. Shades: rose brown, lilac brown, brownish claret, orange brown and deep orange brown; varieties: double transfer and extra frameline at top.

Plates: 460, 461, 462, 463, 530, 531, 532, 533, 70 (790?), 791, 792, 793, 1100, 1101, 1102, 1103, 1332, 1333, 1334, 1335, all being 200-subject plates. Cancellations: Sup-

plementary Mail Type G, China, Philippines. Estimated quantity issued—153,499,379.

While it is hardly necessary to mention it, nevertheless it will be noted from inspection of the several issues that while all showed the same portrait of Lincoln, the issue of 1890 carried no triangles in the frame.

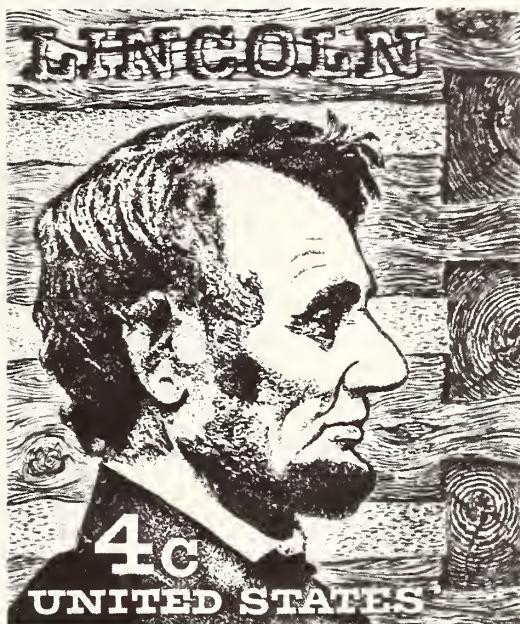
The other three issues carried triangles in the upper left- and right-hand corners. There were no variations of the triangles as there were in subsequent later issues. The triangles indicate "Bureau" issues.

The accompanying photo-enlargements have been prepared to illustrate the design and layout of the stamps discussed in the preceding notes.

POST ON BULLETIN BOARD

4-Cent

REGULAR POSTAGE STAMP IN COILS



The 4-cent Lincoln stamp in coil form will be issued at Springfield, Illinois, on May 28, 1966, during the Lincoln Society of Philately convention.

The design and color (black) will be identical to the recently issued Lincoln stamp in sheet form. Since the design is vertical, the perforations will appear left and right of the portrait.

This stamp will be sold at post offices in full coils of 500 and 3,000. However, collectors may obtain the 4-cent coil stamps in any quantity desired from the Philatelic Sales Unit, City Post Office, Washington, D.C. 20013, on and after May 31, 1966.

Collectors desiring first day cancellations may send addressed envelopes, together with remittance to cover the cost of the stamps to be affixed, to the Postmaster, Springfield, Illinois 62701. Since first day covers are considered first-class mail, collectors must allow for the 5-cent rate when submitting their orders. A 1-cent stamp will be affixed by the Springfield post office, or collectors may affix their own additional postage to the envelopes, leaving the necessary space in the upper right hand corner for the new 4-cent Lincoln coil stamp.

The envelope to the Postmaster should be endorsed "First Day Covers 4¢ Lincoln Coil Stamp." Orders for covers must not include requests for uncanceled stamps. Cover requests must be postmarked no later than May 28.



1363 ★ 4c Lincoln Imperforate (1058a). Mint Pair, V.F. (Photo) 100.00



1364 ★ 4c Red Violet Coil, Imperforate (1058a). Mint Pair, Fine (Photo) 100.00



1365 ★ 4c Lincoln Imperforate (1058a). Pair, Fine (Photo) 100.00

